

south. Both these species are considerably larger than *H. sancta*; and unless the Ansevata bird comes fully up to the measurements given by Mr. Sharpe in his monograph, we should hardly be inclined to accept its being an example of *H. julia*.

We have a solitary specimen of a King Hunter from the Solomon Islands (Makira harbour, we believe) that almost accords with *H. vagans*, Less., from New Zealand, but with no other of our specimens. It is, however, rather more blue in tint, and the underside of the tail-feathers darker, the light spot in front of the eye is larger, and the bill is also larger.

It can at once be distinguished from *H. julia*, *H. chloris*, and *H. sancta* by the absence of the well-marked supercilium and the rich colour of the underparts. In these it exactly accords with *H. vagans*,—the coloration of which, by the way, in Mr. Sharpe's plate is not at all well rendered, the real tint being a warm cinnamon-colour; under wing-coverts cinnamon-red, as in *H. vagans*. If these differences should be constant, we can hardly suppose that it is merely a race of *H. vagans*, Less., and propose to bestow on it the appellation of *H. tristrami*, in honour of our friend and fellow-worker in Polynesian ornithology.

[Note.—I have since received from Mr. Layard three specimens of this bird, which, both from its size and coloration, must be different from any species hitherto described. In this opinion Mr. Sharpe concurs.—H. B. TRISTRAM.]

XLVI.—*Note on Pachycephala assimilis of J. Verreaux and O. Des Murs.* By E. L. and E. L. C. LAYARD.

WE have long been puzzled by not finding the *Pachycephala* (*Muscicapa*) *xanthetræa* of Forster, having in our eye the coloured figure in the 'Cruise of the 'Curaçoa,' p. 376, pl. 12, and having long since satisfied ourselves that the ruddy-coloured species which we find about Noumea was none other than *P. assimilis* of MM. Verreaux and Des Murs. Lately, however, in reading over the description of the former (*loc. cit.*), we were struck with the discrepancy between it and

the coloration of the figure given; and on comparing specimens of *P. assimilis* with the description, it at once became apparent to us that this title must sink into a synonym, the two being identical.

Mr. G. R. Gray, in his "List of New-Caledonian Birds," P. Z. S. 1859, p. 162, says that *P. xanthetræa* was found at the "Island of Nu," and notes specimens being in the British Museum.

Isle Nu, as is well known, forms part of the harbour of Noumea; and it is not likely that, small as it is, and so close to the mainland, it should possess a *Pachycephala* of its own. During a visit paid to it we saw *P. assimilis*, V. & D. M. (?), in several places; and in our three years' residence in Noumea only two species of *Pachycephala* have occurred to us in this neighbourhood—*P. moriariensis** and *P. assimilis*.

If the specimens still remain in the British Museum, a solution of the question is easy enough; and we hope Mr. Sharpe will kindly compare examples of *P. assimilis* with them and set the matter at rest.

MM. Verreaux and Des Murs describe ('Revue Zoologique,' 1860) both male and female of *P. assimilis*; so there is no doubt as to the species they indicate; and from their omitting all reference to the habitat of *P. xanthetræa*, simply stating that specimens were in the British Museum, it is probable that they attributed that name to a species they fancied they had not seen. Their description of *P. assimilis*, however, accords well with that given in the 'Cruise of the 'Curaçoa.' With Forster's original description we are not acquainted.

Noumea, September 1st, 1879.

[Note.—On comparing specimens in the British Museum, I find that Messrs. Layard's conjecture is borne out by the facts.—H. B. TRISTRAM.]

* By a *lapsus calami* we wrote *P. xanthetræa* for this species in describing our first day's collecting in New Caledonia (Ibis, 1877, p. 357).